

**2022-2023**

# **Accomplishments**

Office of International Affairs





As we reflect on the 2022-2023 academic year, the Office of International Affairs is excited to share our remarkable accomplishments. Throughout this period, we dedicated ourselves to enhancing our international programs and expanding recruitment efforts.



# Key Highlights

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# **International Recruitment and Admissions**

In an effort to expand our global reach, we are implementing an international recruitment plan, forging partnerships with reputable recruitment agents in China and Vietnam, and streamlining Shepherd University's international admission process.

**See the key highlights on the following pages →**

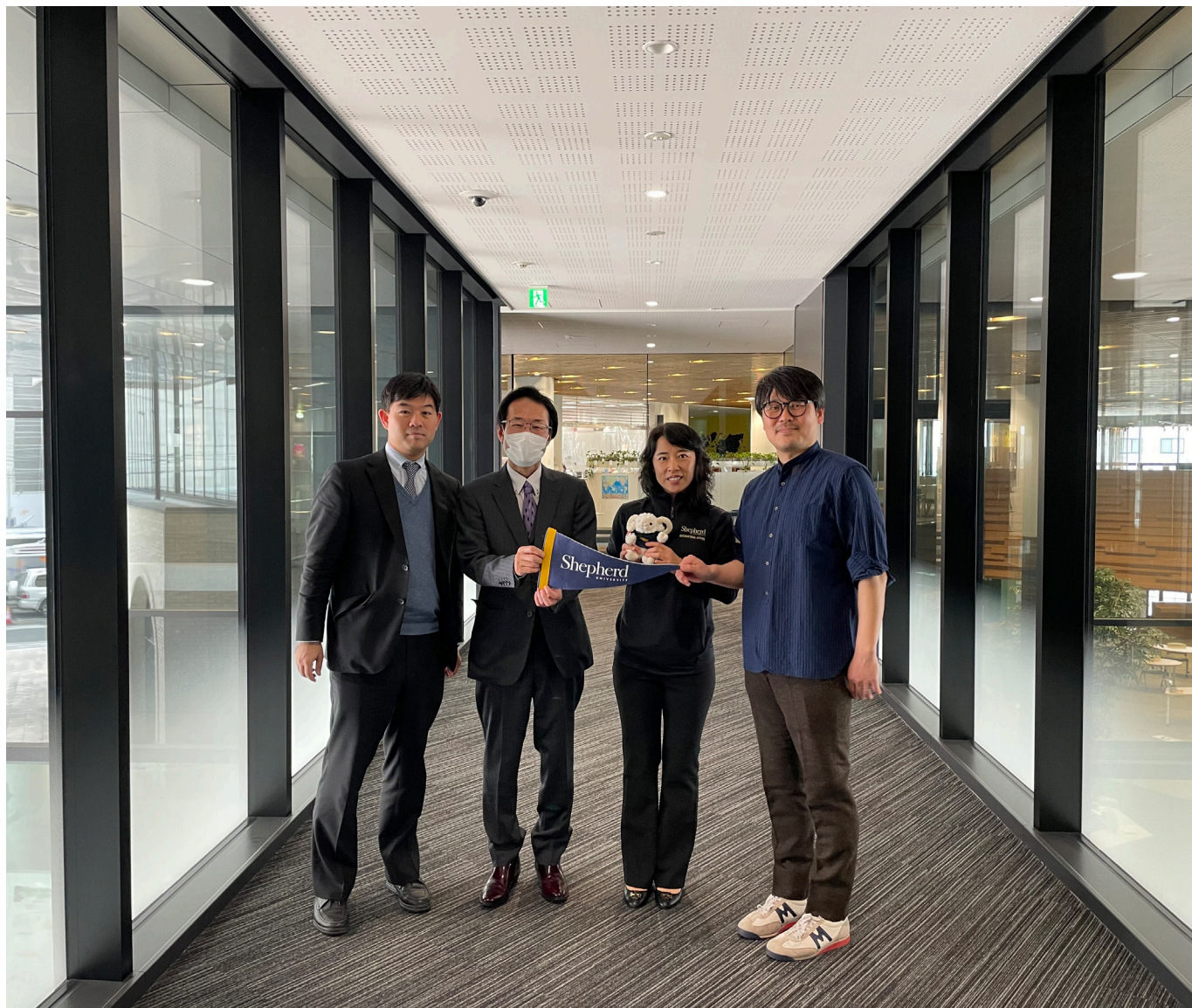


# International Recruitment and Admissions

## Recruitment Travel and Collaboration

In March 2023, we were actively engaged in recruitment travel, both nationally and internationally, and we established meaningful relationships with school representatives and international students from high schools and community colleges in Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. We also traveled to Vietnam, Thailand, and Japan, where we collaborated with our existing school partner Osaka University of Commerce. Additionally, we produced new promotional pieces, including an international recruitment booklet and an Office of International Affairs banner. These pieces, made in collaboration with the University's marketing and communication offices, played a significant role in enhancing our recruitment endeavors.

Our fruitful engagement in Vietnam's recruitment fairs resulted in the formation of two agent partnerships with Global Student Mobility Ltd. and New World Overseas, who have been authorized as our representatives for international recruitment in the country. The visit to Osaka University of Commerce in Japan strengthened the partnership between our two institutions. In August 2023, we welcomed two new Vietnamese students and one Japanese student to the Shepherd community for the fall semester. We also established a partnership with Shanghai Gateway Corporation in Shanghai, China. Our representative in Shanghai has initiated a dialogue for the potential development of a 2+2 joint program in collaboration with a Chinese university.



*Yuanyan Liu, Shepherd University's director of international affairs, visits Osaka University of Commerce in Japan.*



## International Recruitment and Admissions

### Digital Marketing and Virtual Recruitment Events

We entered into a one-year digital marketing agreement with Keystone Education Group, facilitating the promotion of our three academic programs—Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Master of Business Administration, and Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies—through search engine-optimized landing pages in 33+ languages. This collaboration has resulted in increased inquiries from students worldwide, generating a great number of leads, with an especially large group deriving from Africa and Central Asia.

In November 2022, we actively participated in virtual fairs targeting Asian, Middle Eastern, and African markets, engaging with over 1,000 students, parents, and high school counselors. We also participated in the Global Virtual Connection event hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce. This event provided a unique opportunity to virtually connect with potential international students and recruitment partners, promoting our sustainability-focused degree programs.

Thanks to our enhanced visibility through digital marketing efforts, we have observed a broadening of our applicant pool, including students from previously untapped regions of Africa, Central and South Asia, and the Middle East. Countries such as Sierra Leone, Kenya, Liberia, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, Rwanda, Jordan, Egypt, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan, among others, are now represented in our diverse group of applicants.

However, despite the increased number of applications from African countries, we have noticed a rise in the rate of visa denials. This has led to the unfortunate outcome of eight students from Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya, Gambia, and Liberia having their visa applications rejected and we are seeking congressional assistance with this.



# International Recruitment and Admissions

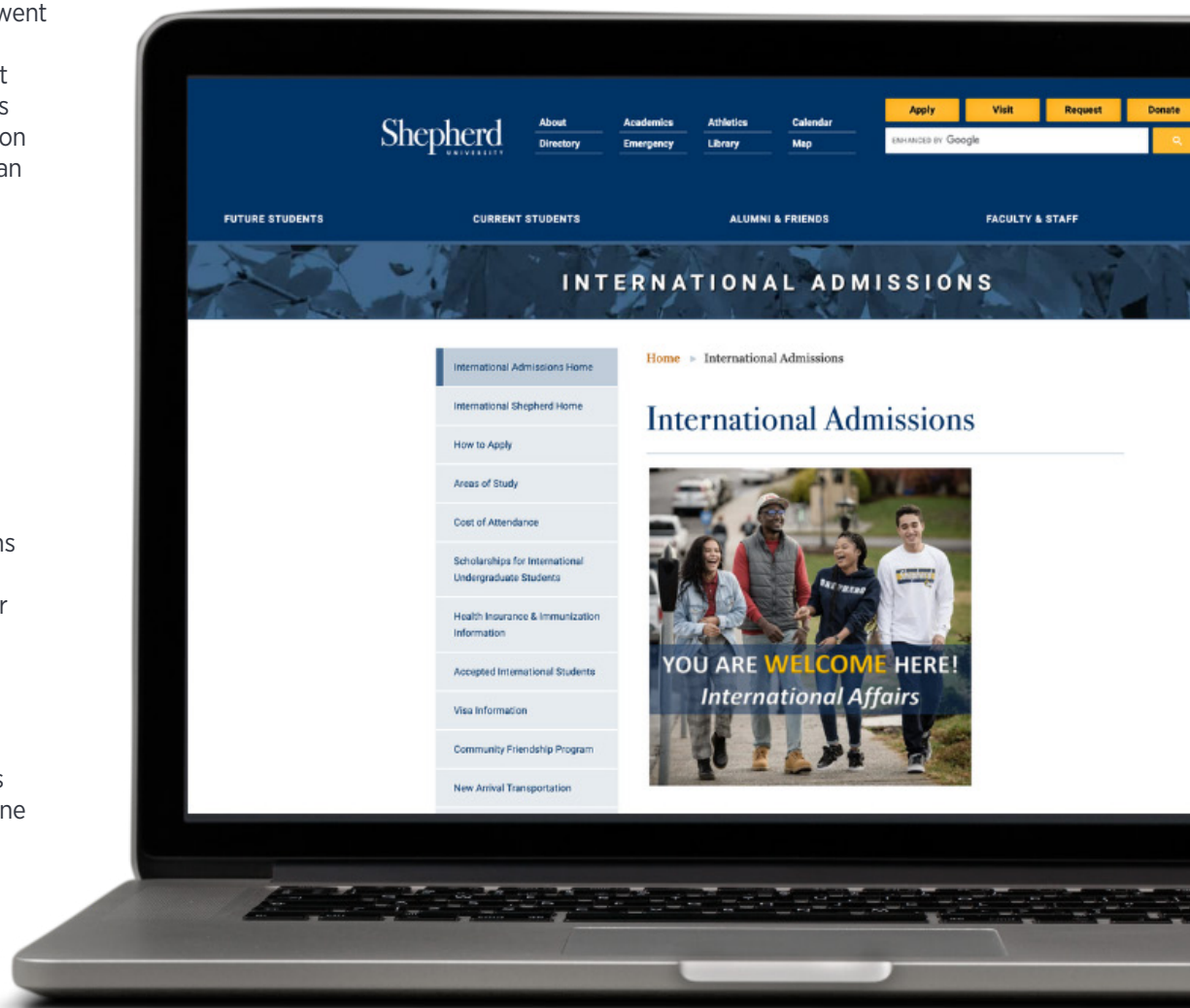
## International Admission Process

Our team has enhanced the efficiency of our international admission process, leading to reduced processing time for applicants. We underwent specialized training to optimize our in-house evaluation process for international high school transcripts. This training covered the different education systems, grading scales, and transcript formats from various countries. By utilizing in-house expertise, we can expedite the evaluation process. Additionally, we implemented a dedicated communication plan tailored to international inquiries from applicants.

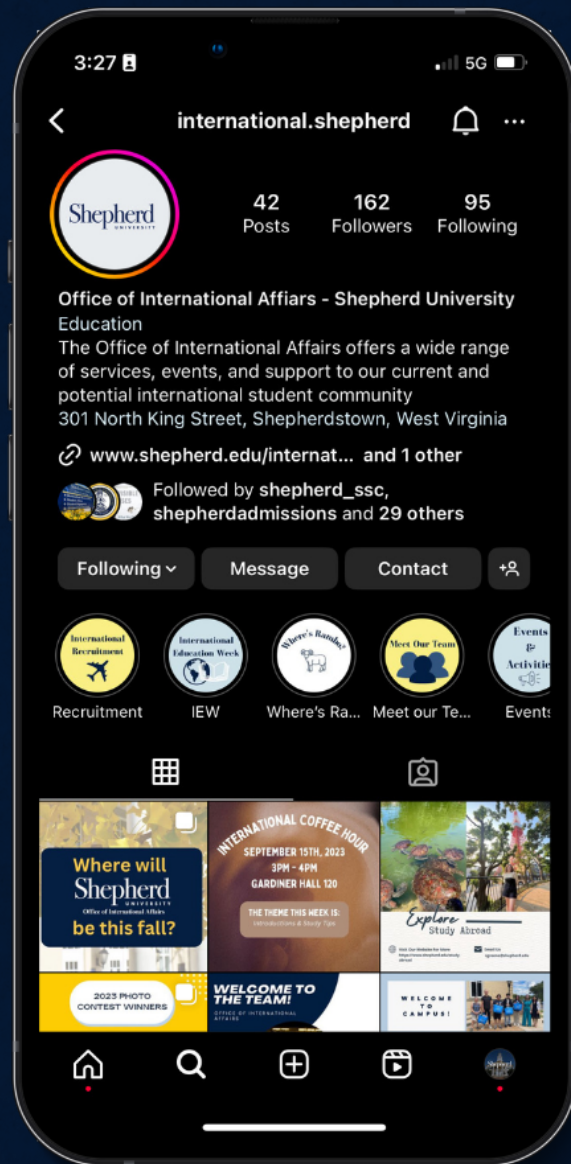
## Collaboration with the Admissions, Registrar, and Academic Advising Offices

Our office teamed up with Shepherd University's Office of Admissions to identify suitable schools and fairs in the Washington metropolitan area for international recruitment. We also conducted a workshop for the Admissions team regarding the international admission process, visa types, and current trends in international education across the United States.

Additionally, we collaborated with the Offices of the Registrar and Academic Advising to ensure a smoother course registration process for international students prior to their arrival by providing one-on-one online communication to compensate for international students' inability to attend our in-person, campus-wide orientations.



# International Recruitment and Admissions



## Social Media Strategy and Outreach

Recognizing social media's power in reaching a wider audience, we developed a comprehensive social media strategy and launched an Instagram account, @international.shepherd. We feature engaging content on Instagram about the application process, campus life, and student activities. We also created an "International Student Spotlight" and a "RAMS Abroad Spotlight" series and launched our "Where's Rambo?" campaign that follows our team along their recruitment travels. Our aim is to raise awareness, create brand recognition, and generate interest in Shepherd University among prospective international students.



# **International Programs and Student Services**

Our office introduced a range of new programs and organized campus-wide events to cater to the unique needs of our international students.

**See some of these new programs and events on the following pages →**



## Programs and Events

- A **comprehensive international student orientation program** to assist international students in their transition to Shepherd University.
- The **Bimonthly International Coffee Hour** program to provide a welcoming space for international students to socialize, build connections, and share their cultural experiences.
- A **Welcome Reception** to greet international students and foster a sense of belonging in the Shepherd community.
- An **International Student Graduation Celebration** to honor the achievements of our graduating international students and provide a memorable send-off as they embark on their future endeavors.
- **Workshops** to provide guidance and support for our international students on various topics, such as cultural adjustment, career services, Optional Practical Training, and Curricular Practical Training.



*Students enjoying one of our Bimonthly International Coffee Hours*



## International Programs and Student Services

Our office worked with the campus community to host a variety of events, including hiking trips, a community-sponsored bonfire night, a Diwali celebration, a world cultural event, and a Thanksgiving dinner celebration. We also collaborated with the School of Music to celebrate Lunar New Year with a piano recital. Moreover, the office connected students with Career Services, raised awareness about International Women's Day and Holi, and organized a day trip to Washington, D.C.

In addition, we created a Welcome Handbook for international students, offering comprehensive information on international student orientation, immigration, academic requirements, cultural adjustment, and campus resources.

*Photos: LEFT (top) Day trip to Washington, D.C.; (middle) Hiking trip to Harpers Ferry, WV; (bottom) community sponsored bonfire night; RIGHT (top) pumpkin carving with the students; (bottom) Diwali celebration*







These achievements were made possible through strategic planning, collaboration with campus stakeholders and the local community, and efficient allocation of resources for recruitment fairs and digital marketing. By leveraging these initiatives, we have successfully strengthened the University's international programs, increased global visibility, and established valuable partnerships.